

Serial No. 10/025,977
CATT-001AMENDMENTSIn the Claims

1.-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method for repairing a cardiac valve having leaflets, said method comprising:

- (a) providing an apparatus configured for delivery to the cardiac valve, the apparatus comprising a releasable fastener element adapted to temporarily grasp and release the valve leaflets;
- (b) using said releasable fastener, grasping the said valve leaflets of the valve together with said releasable fastener element at a selected apposition point;
- (c) measuring at least one of blood flow and pressure gradient across said valve while said releasable fastener element is grasping said leaflets;
- (d) determining whether to permanently secure said valve leaflets at said selected apposition point based upon at least one of said measured blood flow and pressure gradient; and
- (e) releasing said releasable fastener element from said apparatus wherein said releasable fastener element remains grasped to said valve leaflets to permanently secure said leaflets together at a selected apposition site point.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, prior to said step (b), measuring one of at least blood flow and pressure gradient across said valve to obtain a baseline measurement(s).

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein step (d) comprises comparing said measurement(s) of said step (c) with said baseline measurement(s).

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, prior to permanently securing said leaflets, releasing said leaflets and repeating said steps (b) through (d).

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13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein said steps (a) through (c) are repeated until the measurement(s) of step (c) indicates that the functioning of said valve leaflets is sufficiently improved.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed by means of an endovascular approach.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed by means of a surgical approach.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16 further comprising accessing said cardiac valve through an entry site formed within an apex of the heart.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed while the heart is beating.

19.-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, after said step (c), anchoring the releasable fastener element to an appropriate location on the cardiac anatomy

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein the cardiac anatomy is the ventricle wall.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said step (c) comprises delivering at least one of a pressure monitoring probe and a flow monitoring probe proximate to said cardiac valve.

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33. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein said at least one of a pressure monitoring probe and a flow monitoring probe is delivered by means of said apparatus.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said steps (b), (c), (d) and (e) are performed with the assistance of transesophageal echocardiogram,

35. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 9, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

a means for temporarily securing said releasable fastener element to said leaflets and releasing said releasable fastener element from said leaflets; and

a means for permanently securing said releasable fastener element to said leaflets.

36. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 9, wherein said apparatus further comprises a delivery sheath for delivering said releasable fastener element from outside a patient's body to said valve leaflets.

37. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 36, wherein said sheath is selected from the group consisting of a catheter and a cannula.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said cardiac valve is the mitral valve.

39. (New) The method according to claim 9, wherein said releasable fastener element comprises jaws configured for grasping the valve leaflets.

40. (New) The method according to claim 9, wherein said permanently securing said valve leaflets is performed without penetrating said leaflets.

41. (New) The method according to claim 12, wherein said step of releasing said leaflets prior to permanently securing said leaflets is performed with said apparatus.